

A journey of languages around the Northern Seas with discussions on Germanic Celtic and Salishan languages second edition

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, written September 2022, published December 23rd 2022 on my UK-based website www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk in the section of the website titled ebooks, also where my other ebooks are published on this site. Note that the name Book of Dunbarra implies that the website itself is a book, but the website also hosts the publishing of separate ebooks such as this one. This is page one, the title and contents page. This book contains 44 pages. Photos include an author photo on page 2 and two photos of landscapes on the Isle of Barra.

I am a UK resident and this book was originally published in the UK on Amazon, submitted for publishing on the 22nd of September 2022, updated into a slightly different form on 29th September 2022. This book was then re-published as an ebook with changes on my website www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk

*This book is copyrighted by the author, and this includes the three internal photos. The first photo (on page two) is of the author from self-timer on tripod, 2009, the other photos are on page 35 and show the Isle of Barra landscapes. This book includes personally written samples of Nuxalk, East Pethshire Gaelic and Faroese and Scanian sentences, including some sentences in other languages. This book contains 36 internal pages, originally, now it contains 44 pages. This is page one and also the page containing the table of contents. Pages 6 and 27 contain some references to romance. Most of the material in this book has never been published before, the few parts which have been published before, have been updated since being published online and in magazine, have never been in books before (nor have they been published in ebooks), nor have they been archived in any way. **Please note, on my website www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk I have created articles for 'Perthshire Gaelic dialects', 'the Pictish language' and 'the Nuxalk language'. But the content of these articles on the website is separate and different from the material included in this book about these languages.***

.page 1 – title and contents

.page 2 -Self portrait and personal journey

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.pages 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 Gaelic in East Perthshire, and other languages and dialects in Eastern Scotland

.pages 22, 23, 24, 25, 26 The Northern European link to language in Northern and Western Scotland, includes Shetlandic sentences, information on the Finns in Shetland (also the Finns on Fetlar, Shetland, and Finnish-Gaelic etymological links, then new Shetland etymologies such as yoag)

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.pages 32, 33, 34 Nuxalk (Salishan), Afro-Asiatic and Indo-European, - includes examples of Nuxalk sentences and other information.

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.Pages 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 – The Scanian language, an introduction, (with Mikael Lucazin's orthography)

.Page 42: continuation, Scanian sentences in a different dialect of Scanian with different orthography

.Page 43: an introduction to Bohuslänska – a group of southwestern Swedish dialects

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Note: that page 36 contains a sentence “I hope that this book was enjoyable, and God bless”. This is because 36 was the original last page of the book, before the Scanian, Bohuslänska and Cumbrian sections were added.

Note: also that the first edition of this book on amazon was never actually printed or archived anywhere, so this version is now the only copy.

Note: part of the Scanian section was written some years ago and originally published under a pseudonym, Juri Michaelsen, before being included in this book.



Above:

photo of the author, 2009.

I have been fascinated by indigenous languages since around the year 2007, and I have slowly begun to get better at the languages I became interested in then. In 2009 I first visited Torridon in Scotland, and it further awakened for me my deep interest in Gaelic mythology, lore and language. By this point, my interest had also developed into a great admiration for indigenous American languages, such as Inuktitut and Navajo. I hope that everything I write goes towards protecting the world's languages, cultures and our collective wisdom.

Historic language in Northumbria and elsewhere in Northern England

This section contains some little details that are also mentioned on my 'The Cumbric Language' page on my site www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk. Some parts of this article go into much more detail about things I have touched upon previously, or provide further information, some of the topics I discuss here are completely new to me.

Some of the place-names in Northern England are very easily readable as Old Norse, and even as Danish. Some of the sound changes which took place in English, such as long [a:] being [ɛ:] are also found in Danish, and thus the Northern English names Borrowdale and Bretherdale sound pretty similar to the Danish equivalents *Borgedal* approximately pronounced: [ˈpɔʁwtɛːʔl] and *Brededal*, approximately pronounced [bʁɛðɛtɛːʔl]. These names mean 'fort valley' and 'broad valley' respectively.

One could even go as far as to say that the Norse language in Northern England was actually a form of Danish, and this kind of fits. Even though we refer to the "Viking language" as Old Norse, a register of this language was referred to simply as Donsk, Danish. In the Faroe Islands there is a river called *Ljósá* 'light/shining river'. In Cumbria in Northern England is the River Liza, likely of identical origin, perhaps Anglo-Norse *līs-ā*. Although it is possible that the original name was something more like *ljōs-ā* or *liōs-ā*, it is also possible that this vowel-breaking process visible in Nordic languages did not actually take place in the Norse spoken in Britain and Ireland. This I have discussed elsewhere but I will go into some more detail here for this book.

An example of this is that Hugh Marwick in his book *The Orkney Norn* includes an Orcadian word, *herto*, to mean a heart shaped mark on a horse's head. In Shetland Norn 'heart' was *jarta* (from research by Jakob Jakobsen) with vowel breaking, but the Orkney form *herto* is actually pretty much identical to what the Proto-Norse form may have been, **hertō*. It could also be argued in this sense that Anglo-Norse was in some ways already closer to West Germanic than other Nordic languages, and it is perhaps no surprise that we also have the same mixture of North and West Germanic features in Denmark. After all, the Angles, with their West Germanic language, actually came from Denmark as well. So when historians sometimes discuss the mixing of Danish and Anglo-Saxon, the reality is that both languages came from the same place to begin with. In Denmark too there is a language or dialect known as *Angeldansk*, literally 'Anglo-Danish', a Danish dialect with West Germanic elements. Similarly the West Jutlandic varieties of Danish also share many 'west Germanic' features. For example the initial *w* in 'worm' is absent in the North-Germanic forms of the word. On the following page are examples of this word in different North-Germanic languages.

Icelandic:	ormur
Faroese:	ormur
Norwegian:	orm
Swedish:	orm
Danish:	orm
North-West Jutlandic:	wuurm (Marc Daniel Skibsted Volhardt gave this word)
Anglo-Norse:	worm? /orm

Also the initial w- is absent in the name Odin, whereas in Old English it was Wóden and in German Wotan. The North Germanic forms include Odin (Norwegian, Swedish and Danish), and Ódinn (Icelandic, Faroese).

But West Jutlandic follows West-Germanic in this sense, where 'serpent' is worm and Odin is Wodin and so Wednesday is Wonsdåw rather than Danish onsdag. We also find that in Cumbria we have 'worm' as in 'Worm Crag' 'Worm Gill', and we might assume that worm here is Anglic, but it may quite easily be Norse too.

It quite shocked me when I really began to look into the place-names of Northumbria. We are often taught in history that the north of Britain was entirely Brythonic speaking, and then came the Anglo-Saxons, and later on, the Vikings arrived and left a large influence. What I found though was that, in many respects, Northumbria is the most Anglo-Saxon part of England, linguistically. Or rather it is the most 'Anglic' part of England, because we can talk about the Angles and Saxons as two peoples, even if their languages were very similar and in a sense, varieties of the same language. But in my opinion the language we know as Anglo-Saxon was a sort of sacred language used only in certain contexts. There is a Norse presence in Northumbria, although as far as place-names are concerned it is really quite small compared to the Norse presence in Cumbria.

It is perhaps easier to look at this a different way. In all of the 'Anglic' parts of England, mainly the North Sea coast of England, there has been a long term interaction with North-Germanic languages. The Angles, some of whom came from what is now Denmark, have on both sides of the North Sea seen an interaction of North Germanic and West Germanic languages. Some have suggested that Anglic and Saxon languages on both sides of the North Sea came from an original Ingaevonic language, which from what I understand, was altogether distinct from the language that became Old High German and Modern High German/Hochdeutsch. I have wondered if Ingaevonic and specifically 'Anglic' is somehow connected to Doggerland. The Dogger Hills would not have been far from the Northumbrian coastline, and considering the very high concentration of Anglic names in Northumbria compared to other parts of Northern England, I have wondered if 'Anglic', or at least, the people who came to speak Anglic, were in some way connected to

Doggerland. The Anglic language in Northumbria is also referred to as the Northumbrian language, or the Old Northumbrian language. It had distinctions in its runic alphabet, and various sound changes and other differences appear to make it somewhat different from 'Old English' as a whole.

Northumbrian runic inscriptions are some of the finest examples of early Germanic language in the British Isles, and interestingly they also seem very connected to southern parts of Scotland, not western areas like Galloway, but more eastern areas like Dumfriesshire, (where the Ruthwell Cross is located), and all along the corridor between the North Pennines and the Lowlands, towards North Cumbria, Hexham and Northumbria. There are also examples of Northumbrian language in certain parts of Cumbria, for example, on the Furness Peninsula at Urswick Church, a photo of which is included in my book *Ancient languages and their connections*, page 216.

(Note that the *Old Northumbrian* language is distinct from the modern *Northumbrian language*, written about by authors such as Brendan Riley, in his book *Geordie and Northumbria Dialect: Resource book for North East English dialect*, published 17th November 2016). Brendan is a huge enthusiast for languages and a great guy, committed to minority languages, and a speaker of Irish as well as a fluent speaker of Northumbrian. Brendan is also very good with Hebrew, Welsh and has studied many languages.

So far, my own experience with the Northumbrian language is not quite so in-depth, I can however do a Geordie accent, thanks to that character from the TV series *Benidorm*, watching this character has been my education in the Geordie, Newcastle and Northumbrian dialects. Although the Urban dialects and the dialects of younger people today are often dialects of 'English' rather than being the Northumbrian language per-se, there are still a number of things I hear when speaking to Geordies, for example saying *with us* instead of *with me*, where *us* is sometimes used as the singular first person object pronoun. That, and the obvious typically Northern English things, like saying 'aye' and pronouncing things slightly differently.

As I have stated previously in other articles, sometimes the difference between 'Norse' and 'Anglic' appears to be one of how the original root words are *arranged* grammatically. For example, the word *tarn* in Northern England is technically a Norse word, but its phonology behaves as though it is Anglic. Also the word *stan* appears in a Norse runic inscription from Northern England, in the inscription transcribed as:

kali:ouluis:sunr:lapi:stan:pinsi:ubir:fukul:brupur, the inscription means "Kali Olvi's Son, laid this stone over Fugl (his) brother...". I have discussed these inscriptions elsewhere. The word *stan* here is curious because *stan* reflects Anglic phonology, rather than a more typical Anglo-Norse rendering of *stain* or *stin*. These variations are in some ways reflected in the Cumbrian dialect today, where *steean* is a stone, a similar variation takes place on

Orkney where this vowel is sometimes represented as [i] or [e]. Below is an example of the Lord's Prayer in Northumbrian Old English, (based upon the version given in *Northumbrian Culture and Language*, by Bell, Laird D T.)

**Fader usær ðu arð in heofnu
 Sie gehalgad noma ðin
 Tocymeð ríc ðin
 Sie willo ðin
 suæ is in heofne and in eorðo
 hlaf userne of'wistlic sel ús todæg,
 and f'gef us scylda usra
 suæ uoe f'gefon scyldgum usum
 And ne inlæd usih in costunge
 ah gefrig usich from yfle**

Below is a more standard Old English version of the prayer.

**Fæder ūre þū þē eart on heofonum
 Sī þīn nama gehālgod
 Tō becume þīn rice
 Gewurpe þīn willa
 On erðon swā swā on heofonum
 Urne gedæghwamlīcan hlāf syle ūs tō dæg
 And forgyf ūs ūre gyltas
 Swā swā wē forgyfō ūrum gyltendum
 And ne gelæd þū ūs on costnunge
 Ac alȳs ūs of yfele.**

Note that some of the differences are due to spelling, but many are not. In Northumbrian transcription I generally do not write 'w'. Note also that the soft c is a 'ch' as in 'cheese' in Saxon, but less often so in Anglic and in Northumbrian.

Even though I am from England, until now I never really took so much interest in the Anglic and Saxon languages. I have however, often felt somewhat drawn to the idea of Anglo-Saxon life, the idea of being a young man at a village fête (well, I still am a young man), and being courted by a golden haired warrior woman in her thirties. I am no longer in 6th form, but I still feel a manifestation of this sacred Anglic consciousness, I include this because there is a certain powerful romantic 'spirit' connected to our ancestry I feel. In fact, with time, I have come to feel that romance, traditions, and ancestry, and connected in a beautiful tapestry of life. In a sense this is what our ancient religions were originally about in their true form, our presence in nature, the joy of nature, caring for nature, respecting nature, and honouring love, family, and our responsibilities among the plants and animals. This is I believe an

element of Anglic spirituality, and it later becomes reflected in the Christian tradition. I also find it fascinating how, Goidelic languages and Anglic are so unrelated, yet culturally speaking, the Christian artwork, and the music are in some ways very similar in both cultural zones. One could even argue that ancient Northumbrian rock art is very similar to much of that found in parts of Ireland. I recently visited the Vindolanda museum on Hadrian's Wall, where I saw a beautiful example of a triskelion from the Christian period. This to me, further demonstrates the way in which the Goidelic, Anglic and Norse cultures were able to communicate with spirituality and the heart of nature all around them, and that they represented this in these sacred patterns, shapes and ideas, which are found throughout the ancient landscapes and throughout the later Christian artwork. The name Vindolanda is likely from Gaulish **windolandā** which contains the Gaulish words **wind-** 'white' and **landā** – 'designated area of land', these words are related to the Welsh words *gwyn* and *llan*. The meaning of 'white' here is thought to refer to the large amounts of snow that Vindolanda received, and still receives often in the winter months. I personally believe that the Gaulish or Brittonic language in this part of England was mainly a register, a formal form of speech, an aspect of the central interconnectedness of Atlantic 'Celtic' cultures, with certain common trade, family and religious customs. From what I understand, many parts of Scotland remained outside of this 'Indo-European' web and thus it is possible that they remained pre-Indo-European.

Many of the 'Cumbric' names from Northern England may actually be interpreted as pre-Celtic root words, which simultaneously exist in Brythonic, and which simultaneously exist in similar genitive and adjectival constructions to those found in Celtic languages. In other words, these so-called Cumbric names may be from a language which is neither Celtic nor Indo-European, but which shares certain structural traits and root words with Celtic, from ancient times when the landscape was very different. For example the place-name Plenmellor close to Vindolanda is likely related to the Welsh words *blaen* – 'summit' and *moel* – 'moorland', but here we see that there may be an extra suffix of unknown meaning, and that *bl* is represented instead as *pl*. From my own research these words cannot be traced to an Indo-European language, and despite being found within Indo-European Celtic languages, I do not believe that either word actually originates in 'Indo-European'. Another fascinating example of this first word exists in the name *Blenkett* on the coast of Morecambe Bay. This name has been thought of as Cumbric, and it does indeed show exact phonetic correspondence to the Welsh *blaen coed* which would mean 'summit of the forest', showing typical Welsh or Celtic adjectival order. However, from my own research, I have also come to think that both of these words are likely not Indo-European in origin. And, furthermore, there is a cave located within Blenketh forest, not to mention that the caves on this peninsula, the Cartmel Peninsula, have evidence of Mesolithic and Upper-Palaeolithic human activity. Could the words 'blen' and 'kett' come from an

Upper Paleolithic language, which was not 'Celtic', but somehow related to Welsh, Cornish and Breton in ancient times?

Another curious piece of evidence here is that the name *Cartmel* may also be 'Celtic', or rather, pre-Celtic. In this name we may have another example of a cognate to the Welsh word *moel*, - 'moor'. Examples are found throughout Cumbria, for example 'Mell Fell.

I have discussed elsewhere the presence of Goidelic names around Morecambe Bay, this is talked about in some detail in some of the books I completed this year, and also in the article online on omniglot:

Ancient language and extra-Indo-European language in Britain. One of the most common 'Goidelic' elements in this area appears in Old Irish as *érghe* meaning essentially a place for cattle, often the correct kind of pasture. It appears for example in the name Torver in Northern Lancashire, close to Coniston. But I think perhaps this element and the other 'Goidelic' elements are similar in their manifestation to how the so-called Brythonic elements manifest. The 'Goidelic' names may also be pre-Celtic and pre-Indo-European, but in this case they are shared more with Goidelic languages and with a Western maritime orientation, rather than with Brythonic languages and a more inland orientation. I am not sure if this is two ancient cultures, showing that the difference between Brythonic and Goidelic is in some ways completely ancient, or if it is due to geographical reasons, although I suspect that the former is true, and that the latter plays a part.

For more information on the Gaulish or Gallo-Brittonic language which certainly did exist as an elite language, I have to recommend the book by my friend Edward Hatfield, who has researched Brythonic and Gaulish to a truly dedicated expert level. His book on Common Brittonic is titled: *Pritanica: A Dictionary of the Ancient British Language*, published 18th Nov. 2016. Edward Hatfield is also very knowledgeable about Germanic languages, including Old English, Old Saxon, Old Frisian, as well as being knowledgeable about other ancient Celtic languages such as Lepontic, Old Irish and Old Welsh, as well as learning to read Ancient Egyptian.

It is a strange coincidence, or perhaps not, that both Edward Hatfield and Brendan Riley have published books about indigenous British languages on more or less the exact same day. My article here is dedicated to all friends, wishing you luck in love and in your good deeds, and above all, thanking my friends for the support, encouragement and love they have given me. Especially those male friends like these two, who are strong individuals, and also kind, fair, sensitive and understanding, the exact kind of friends that a guy needs. I give great thanks.

I would like to also give love to a friend who helped me recently with kind words, and to Neil Whalley, an expert in the Cumbric language who I have known for many years, and who I have discussed and consulted about the Brythonic languages and about his interpretation of Cumbric. Whilst I may not share the exact same views about Cumbric that Neil has written about, I greatly admire his work, and I agree that to some extent such a language would have been spoken across the Old North, at least by a certain royal Brythonic families (*in my opinion, this is why the language of historic Welsh literature is so greatly connected to the Old North, it seems perhaps to have been a particular culture, wisdom and language, connected to the organisation and carrying down of certain myths, only some of which are represented across Wales and the Old North in local folklore, this is just my opinion though*).

I have a great respect for Neil's Cumbric, and hope that his work continues with Cumbraek becoming more incorporated into the modern revival of culture in the Old North. I made some attempts for years to developed my own forms of Cumbric, but I feel now that this reseach has become more dedicated to the identification of pre-Celtic elements and to the study of Cumbric from that particular angle. I feel that Neil's version of Cumbric, known as Cumbraek, is where the future of revived Cumbric is going, and I hope in the future that I may adopt this form of Cumbric in writing various things, perhaps with archaeological site notices at old castles and historic locations connected to the Old North (provided of course that I have the opportunity and permissions). I would also be interested in working on reviving a form of Goidelic in Cumbric and Lancashire. An example of the Cumbric I did write, a very late form, is available in my book, *Languages and dialects of Northwestern Europe*, as a poem titled *Solas Blah Y Gheuree*, which is written in Manx and in Cumbric. There are various other pages with Cumbric throughout this book and with a few bits in other books.

Neil has also published two free online books on Cumbraek, titled:

Grammadek Cumbraek An Essential Grammar of Cumbraek, by Neil Whalley

Geryadour Cumbraek English – Cumbraek Dictionary, by Neil Whalley

Neil also has two websites for Cumbric and a more general website for The Old North, its history and historic languages.

<https://cumbraek.wordpress.com/>

<http://old-north.co.uk/wordpress/>

The Gaelic dialects of St Kilda, with comments on Gaelic and language in the Outer Hebrides

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, August 2022.

(Note: some changes and additions have been made to this article since it was published on omniglot this August).

(Note: on my website www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk there is an article for St Kilda Gaelic. The content of that article on my website is different to the content of this article here)

About 90 percent of what I have been able to learn about St Kilda Gaelic, comes from the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland. In the dialect surveys, there are three contributors who give words from St Kilda Gaelic, and, all of the words mentioned in this article are from those pronunciations given in the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh. The word forms are marked with a number, e.g. (15), to show the contributor from the dialect surveys in relation to a particular word; but, as with my article about Arran Gaelic, I have adapted the phonetic information given by these speakers into a more Gaelic-based orthography. The orthography used here is thus based upon standard Scottish Gaelic, but with changes to help show the St Kilda pronunciation. Note also that I have only been able to write some of the sound changes in these words, and that I do not include all St Kilda pronunciations of these words included. In some cases where I add for example (14), (15) but not (16), there may be a form from informant (16) which I haven't included. Note also that informants 14, 15 and 16 are all from the same island in St Kilda, Hirta. There are no informants from Soay or Boreray, which have been largely uninhabited, at least in recent centuries.

St Kilda is well known to people in Scotland, and to nature-lovers from the UK in general. But for those who have never heard of St Kilda, St Kilda is a small archipelago, located out to sea, and west of the main Outer Hebrides island chain. This main island chain includes, from north to south, Lewis, Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist, Eriskay and Barra. There are many other smaller islands within this island chain, but these are the islands that people generally refer to as the Outer Hebrides. Further to the west, is a group of much smaller islands. In English they are known as St Kilda, and in Gaelic as **Hiort**. The islands of St Kilda are now uninhabited, except for people living there temporarily. The website Tobar an Dualchais has some recordings of Gaelic, spoken by original residents of St Kilda. And from this I have discussed a little about the prosody of the St Kilda Gaelic dialects. As far as I know this topic has not been researched by anyone else, and so I am

somewhat in the dark with how much progress I have been able to make, so far, I can just make certain comments about the prosody. For instance, sometimes the prosody of St Kilda Gaelic audible at Tobar an Dualchais sounds a little like Argyll Gaelic prosody to me, but other times, the prosody of St Kilda Gaelic sounds closer to the prosody of some Irish dialects. I have heard a similar 'Irish-like' prosody in some of the recordings of Wester-Ross Gaelic at Tobar an Dualchais, but from my own research, this seems to be found in the northern, aka Ullapool region of Wester Ross, and not so much in the dialects of Torridon, Lochalsh and Duirinish. With regards to the similarity to Argyll Gaelic, I have occasionally heard what is almost like a stød sound in St Kilda Gaelic, from the recordings on Tobar an Dualchais. This is not common, and I would not interpret it as a full stød or as a full glottal stop. But more recently I did notice that the word *fighe* – 'knitting, weaving' is given with a medial glottal stop for speaker 16 from St Kilda (Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland). This glottal stop is not given as existing in other Outer Hebridean dialects in the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland, but the glottal stop is given for this word in the language of several informants from Argyll.

So essentially, St Kilda Gaelic, in my opinion, shows a range of prosodic structures that can't be tied to any particular region or origin with ease. The phonemes of St Kilda Gaelic are also clearly audible in the recordings at Tobar an Dualchais, and now I am going to discuss some of those features. I have previously discussed St Kilda Gaelic on my non-commercial website, The Book of Dunbarra, but this article will provide further information and examples.

Broad velarised l to [w] or [u]

In St Kilda Gaelic, the broad velarised l tends to be [w] or a variant of [u] or [ʊ]. The distribution of [ɫʷ] for the broad velarised l is far more common, and is found in various parts of Argyll and elsewhere. But [w] is quite unique, although it also occurs in Lismore Gaelic for instance, according to people I have spoken to, although the *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland* tends to give [v] more commonly on Lismore. Below are some examples from St Kilda Gaelic, followed by their spelling in standard Scottish Gaelic.

làmh – 'a hand', St Kilda **wàmh** (14)

eunlaith – 'birds', St Kilda Gaelic **iawaidh** (15), note that **-aidh** here represents [ai].

dlò – 'a handful of corn', St Kilda Gaelic **dwò** (14)

laogh – 'a calf', St Kilda Gaelic **wùgh** (15), **uaogh** (16)

labhairt – ‘speaking’, St Kilda Gaelic **wabhairt** (14) **uabhairc** (16)

long – ‘a ship’, St Kilda Gaelic **wong** (14 and 15), **uoung** (16)

eòlas – ‘traditional knowledge’, St Kilda Gaelic **eowas** (14, 15) **euwas** (16)

làidir – ‘strong’, St Kilda Gaelic **wàidil** (15), **uàgir** (16)

luchd – ‘load’, St Kilda Gaelic **wuchg** (14, 15), **uuchg** or **euach** (16) (the latter form contains something close to [ɛu]).

loisg – ‘burn’, St Kilda Gaelic **woist** (14 and 15), **uoisge** (16)

dall - ‘blind’, St Kilda Gaelic **dauw** (14 and 15), **dauϕ** (16)

dlùth – ‘near, close’, St Kilda Gaelic **duù** (16)

mholadh – ‘would praise’, St Kilda Gaelic **mhowadh** (15), **mhouadh** (16)

Notes:

1. The word *dlùth* is given as having two separate [u] vowels.
2. As can be seen, an [ϕ] can arise from where the broad, velarised l becomes [w], this is given as a small [ϕ] in the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland.

Slender r and slender l

In St Kilda Gaelic, slender r and slender l often interchange with one another. I am not sure what is the specific pattern behind these changes. Another possibility is that there might have been another language spoken in St Kilda in ancient times, and so the seemingly random l and r switches could come from that the original language of St Kilda did not possess these as distinct sounds, and so when they adopted the Gaelic language, they did not always repeat these sounds as they are in Gaelic. In terms of what this earlier language might have been, we can talk about Norse. Some of the island names in St Kilda are of Norse origin, like Soay and Boreray, which I think are likely from Old Norse *Sauðey* – ‘sheep island’ or perhaps more likely *Souðey* in the Norn language, which to some extent was connected Western Scotland as well as being spoken in the Northern Isles; and *Borgarey* – ‘fort’s island’, although in Old Norse *borg*, genitive singular *borgar* can also refer to a ‘castle shaped’ rock formation. In the Norn language *Borgarey* could be spelled something like *Borgharey*.

But I would argue that the Norse presence in St Kilda had more to do with navigational naming, i.e. that Norse names were applied to some features because they were navigational to the Norse sailors. Norse names are found throughout the Outer Hebrides, but I think many of them are navigational rather than suggestive that there were actually many Norse speakers on these islands. The Norse language, was I think connected in some way to a much earlier 'oceanic' language, and for example, the names Hirta, and also the names of the nearby islands of Harris/Na Hearadh, Lewis/Leòdhas, and Uist/Uibhist may be pre-Celtic and pre-Norse in origin. Below are some examples of slender l and slender r interchanging:

éirich – 'to rise', St Kilda Gaelic **éilich** (15), **éirich** (16)

cuiridh – 'will put', St Kilda Gaelic **cuilidh** (15)

creididh – 'will believe', St Kilda Gaelic **cleidich** (15), **creigich** (16)

idir – 'at all', St Kilda Gaelic **idil** (15), **igir** (16)

muir – 'sea', St Kilda Gaelic **muil** (15)

goirid – 'short', St Kilda Gaelic **goilid** (15), **göirig** (16)

meòirean – 'fingers', St Kilda Gaelic **meoilean** (15)

eile – 'other', St Kilda Gaelic **eile** (14) and (15), **eiri** (16)

litir – 'a letter', St Kilda Gaelic **lihtil** (15), **lichcir** or **lichcil** (16)

imlich – 'lick, lap', St Kilda Gaelic **imilich** (15), **gimilich** or **gimirich** (16)

Note: in my spelling of St Kilda Gaelic, I write pre-aspiration, so in **lihtil** the h represents [h], and in **lichcir** the ch represents [ç]. Note that **gimilich** and **gimirich** likely represent the verb-noun form, e.g. standard Gaelic: *ag imlich*, St Kilda Gaelic: **gimilich** – 'licking, lapping'. Attaching the particle *ag* onto a verb-noun beginning with a vowel is fairly common in some Gaelic dialects. It also occurs in Manx e.g. *ta mee gynsagh*, Scottish Gaelic: *tha mi ag ionnsachadh*.

Note that ï is written for the similarly spelled vowel in this word in the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland, except that in the survey this letter is given with a small hook below. The letter **ö** is for a sound spelled as a variant of [ø] in the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland. This may be much the same sound as the [ø] sound in Arran Gaelic.

Note: with regards to navigational names, I have used the website floodmap.net to look at how much the sea level would need to drop in order for St Kilda to be connected to the Outer Hebrides. From this website, it seems that the sea level would have to be about 120 metres lower than present day levels for St Kilda to have been connected by a land bridge. Due to glacial rebound, Mesolithic sea levels in Scotland would have been somewhat higher than present day levels, so to go back to a time of earlier sea levels, we would be looking at the Ice Age. But even then, there is a lot of confusion about what the Ice Age landscape looked like, but I am largely unconvinced that people would have been able to 'walk' to St Kilda during this time, even though I am not aware where the ice sheets were in relation to St Kilda.

More notes on consonants

As you will have noticed, the sounds represented as slender t and d in other dialects are often instead **c** and **g** in St Kilda Gaelic. This is another change which, from what I can tell, appears to have no obvious pattern, not which I have noticed previously. I am unsure on to what extent these consonants are voiced or voiceless in St Kilda Gaelic, so to make things easier, I write the change from t as **c** and the change from d as **g**. Similar changes do take place in other Gaelic dialects, but in St Kilda Gaelic these changes seem far more common place. Note that **g** and **c** are pronounced like slender forms of [g] and [k], although the exact degree to which these sounds are unvoiced or voiced is somewhat a matter of debate. Generally speaking [k] occurs with initial aspirated consonants, but this is not by any means a rule across Gaelic dialects. Below are some examples of **c** and **g**.

teaghlach – 'a family', St Kilda Gaelic **teàwach** (14), **ceoach** (16)

teanga – 'a tongue', St Kilda Gaelic **ceænga** (16)

tiugh – 'thick', St Kilda Gaelic **ciu** (16)

teth – 'hot', St Kilda Gaelic **ce** (16)

tionndadh – 'turning', St Kilda Gaelic **ciaunntadh** (16)

diallaid – 'a saddle', St Kilda Gaelic: **diawaid** (14, 15), **giauig** (16)

deas – 'ready', St Kilda Gaelic **des** (15), **geas** (16)

creid – 'believe', St Kilda Gaelic **cleig** or **creig** (16)

deug – ‘teen’, St Kilda Gaelic **diag** (14), **giag** (16)

dealg – ‘thorn’, St Kilda Gaelic **deawag** (14), **geuag** (16)

Note that the second vowel in **diag**, **giag** is a schwa.

Notes on St Kilda Gaelic vowels

Sometimes the quality of vowels and the diphthongs is quite different in St Kilda Gaelic. Standard Gaelic *donn* – ‘brown’ has frequent diphthongisation of the [o], but in St Kilda Gaelic this diphthong is given as [œʊ] in the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland for informant sixteen’s pronunciation of *donn*, which I would write as **dœun** in St Kilda Gaelic. Note that in this article I have also written some of the other diphthongs, including those before ‘n’, which would not normally be written in Gaelic, e.g. **ciaunntadh**.

The distinction between broad and slender consonants in St Kilda Gaelic seems rather different with regards to the slender s and slender d in some cases. From recordings at Tobar an Dualchais, the St Kilda Gaelic slender s sounds to me more like a palatalised [s] rather than [ʃ], at least in some instances. The *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland* gives the word *deoch* – ‘a drink’, in the language of informants 14 and 15 this word is pronounced without the d being palatalised or becoming a variant [tʃ] or [tʃ], instead, the slender vowel e in this word is pronounced as a separate vowel, with the vowel sound in this word being written as [ɛɔ]. This is quite unusual in this word. Even though some Gaelic speakers will include two vowels in a sequence for this word, it is very unusual I think for there to be no palatalisation or ‘slender marking’ present. Many other vowels in St Kilda Gaelic are the same as they are in most other Hebridean Islands, for example the sound represented by **ao** in St Kilda Gaelic is often [u:]. In the language of informant 16, there is palatalisation or slenderisation in the two forms of this word given by this speaker; these could be written as **dioch** and **geoch**.

The wider context of ancient language in St Kilda and the Outer Hebrides:

When it comes to looking for possibly pre-Celtic and pre-Norse cultures, there are a couple of things that come to mind. Firstly, the Gaelic language on Lewis is quite distinctive from other dialects, one of the notable distinctions being that the slender r is often a sound close to [ð]. This also occurs in parts of the Uists. Connected to the Isle of Lewis are legends of the *ciuthach* giants, which on Lewis are associated with brochs. I discovered this when reading: *Further Remarks on the Ciuthach* by David MacRitchie, *The Celtic Review* Vol. 9, No. 36 (Apr., 1914), pp. 344-346. The Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, also includes very interesting Lewis pronunciations, for example *famhair* – giant, pronounced [fæ:mað] or [fævað], *creid* – believe, pronounced [kðæt]. These

pronunciations are according to the dialect survey edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh. I think I would personally find it impossible to write Lewis Gaelic, and it is a whole new area of research for me. I previously did not study it in any detail really, because these dialects are less endangered I think, but, I suspect that some of this information and some of the Lewis Gaelic dialects may need a lot more research and help with revival.

Brochs are archaeologically speaking 'Pictish' structures, but I very much doubt that this broch-culture on Lewis was speaking the same language as the P-Celtic language found in the heart of Pictland, i.e. Fife, Aberdeenshire etc.

A culture of unknown identity existed in South Uist during the Bronze Age. Some aspects of this culture are similar to cultural innovations often associated with Celtic languages, for example, round houses. But other aspects of this culture, known only from Cladh Hallan, **Cladh Hàlainn** on South Uist, are definitely foreign to what we know of Celtic culture. One of these practices was mummification, Cladh Hallan being the only known site in the UK where deliberate mummification took place. Not only did the people at Cladh Hallan mummify their dead, but these mummies may have been physical deities and ancestors, as they kept adding new parts onto the mummies. In fact, one of the mummies discovered was made from three different individuals, spanning many hundreds of years. Perhaps these mummies can be thought of as collective ancestral gods in a sense, maintaining a physical connection to the tribe and community over time.

Trying to put any accurate interpretation on Cladh Hallan is impossible at this stage, but what is for sure, is that the historical cultures of the Outer Hebrides hold a lot more mysteries than I used to believe. For many of us, it may be quite strange to think that such practices existed in ancient Scotland, yet in one way or another, these islands seem to have been considered as incredibly sacred places throughout human history. In their own unique way, I feel that the people of Cladh Hallan recognised this, just as the early Christians recognised it in their own way.

Written in honour of the ancestors of St Kilda and the Hebrides, and in honour of their descendants. I am also grateful to Cathair Ó Dochartaigh and to all individuals who helped to contribute to the dialect survey.

Note that my St Kilda Gaelic page on my website www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk contains different information about St Kilda Gaelic, which ideally should be read alongside this article for more information, as the information on the website has different points and word examples etc.

Gaelic in East Perthshire, and other languages and dialects in Eastern Scotland

Linden Alexander Pentecost, September 2022

(Note that my website www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk has an article on 'Perthshire Gaelic dialects' and one on 'Pictish', the article below contains unique and different content from the articles on my website)

This article was originally published in the Silly Linguistics magazine by Rolf Weimar, this version of the article is to give the article a more permanent form. There are also some changes and some additional material.

Scottish Gaelic, like Faroese, is a language which, when written, often gives an imposing indication of the etymological roots of that language. The etymological spelling of Gaelic does work very well I think, to show the language as a whole, and as a medium that fits the dialects due to their historic etymological connections. On the other hand, standard Scottish Gaelic spelling makes it rather impossible to indicate, or see the dialects of the language in the spelling. And so the dialectal diversity of Scottish Gaelic is perhaps not as widely considered or discussed as it should be.

The standard spelling of Gaelic works particularly well for the dialects of the Isle of Skye for example. Skye is a wild island, massive mountains, deep sea-lochs, which are technically 'fjords' in geological terms. But Scotland is a diverse country, with a diverse range of landscapes, and also a diverse range of dialects. So let's take a tour away from the Gaelic-speaking highlands, eastwards, to a land of wooded valleys, moorlands and gently flowing rivers. This is Perthshire. When the autumn comes to Skye, and the wind blows, the autumn arrives more gently in Perthshire. The trees turn golden, orange and red, where the gently countryside meets the wilder valleys. If we go north of Perthshire, we reach the Cairngorms, and the great ancient forests of Scots pine forests, which make me feel more like I am in Northern Norway or Canada than Scotland.

The eastern landscapes of Scotland from Perthshire, and north to the Cairngorms, were also historically Gaelic-speaking. But you will hear very little of the native Gaelic dialects nowadays. I have only really heard these dialects thanks to recordings available at the website: *Tobar an Dualchais*; and I can say that, the prosody of these eastern dialects is quite different. Prosodic differences also coincide with phonetic differences. For this reason for example, there is an informant with recordings at Tobar an Dualchais, his name is Christopher MacDonald, from Acharn close to Loch Tay, **Loch Tatha**.

When I listen to this speaker, I find it sometimes quite hard to understand. Many of the Gaelic vowel sounds are identical to those in Western Scotland, but other differences with Eastern Gaelic, including the prosody, can make it quite difficult for me to understand.

Note that Loch Tay is also the site of a Crannóg visitor centre. A Crannóg is an ancient Scottish dwelling, often situated on a lake, and supported upon wooden poles. The area of eastern Scotland has a far larger 'Brythonic' or 'P-Celtic' influence that is visible in place-names. This language is usually described as 'Pictish', although I myself am unconvinced that Pictish can be thought of as a single language. In any case though, I suspect that the prosody of Perthshire Gaelic around Loch Tay/**Loch Tatha**, could contain a sort of continuity from whatever language was spoken there thousands of years ago.

One of the major differences that one might encounter with Perthshire Gaelic and the Gaelic in the Cairngorms, is apocope. This is perhaps more pronounced in Perthshire than anywhere else, but apocope does occur to different degrees throughout the whole of eastern and northern Scotland.

Most of what I have learned of East Perthshire Gaelic is from the book *East Perthshire Gaelic, Social History, Phonology, Texts and Lexicon*, by Máirtín Ó Murchú. The samples of words in the section just below, are based on the phonetic examples of informant 201 in the *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh. With the exception of the first word, the other words are written based on the pronunciation of informant 201 but written into the orthography. This orthographic adaptation of East Perthshire Gaelic only represents *some* of the sounds and is a simplification compared to the detail in the *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland*. Note that some of the words such as **lagchin** and **doimhnd** are quite specific to informant 201.

samhradh – 'summer', East Perthshire Gaelic: **samhar**, pronounced [sãũər]

ag ionnsachadh – 'learning', East Perthshire Gaelic: **geunnsach**

sealladh – 'view', East Perthshire Gaelic: **seoll**

diùltadh – 'refusal', East Perthshire Gaelic: **diùlt**

falt – 'hair', East Perthshire Gaelic: **falt**

duine – 'man', East Perthshire Gaelic: **dun**

sluagh – 'people, crowd', East Perthshire Gaelic **slua**

lagan – ‘a hollow’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **lagchin**

domhain – ‘deep’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **doimhnd**

sgriobhadh – ‘writing’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **sgriù**

diallaid – ‘saddle’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **diollt**

The apocope in East Perthshire Gaelic seems to be connected to a general ‘compacting’ of syllables and word elements, which of course can make the Perthshire dialects quite hard to understand, for those not used to hearing them (i.e., me). For example, according to what I understand from information in the book: *East Perthshire Gaelic, Social History, Phonology, Texts and Lexicon*, by Máirtín Ó Murchú; the consonant of the definite singular article in East Perthshire Gaelic often seems to be attached onto the following noun.

This, arguably occurs across Gaelic as a whole, but in East Perthshire Gaelic the vowel is consistently deleted in most contexts, hence *am bàta* – ‘the boat’ is written as **mbàd**. Below are some examples of sentences in standard Gaelic spelling and in East Perthshire Gaelic, I wrote them but the pronunciations are based on what I have learned of the dialect from *East Perthshire Gaelic, Social History, Phonology, Texts and Lexicon*, by Máirtín Ó Murchú, with some words included from informant 201 in the *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh.

Standard Gaelic: *an taigh mór* – ‘the big house’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **ndaigh mór**

Standard Gaelic: *tha an duine a’ sgrìobhadh* – ‘the man is writing’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **tha ndun sgrìu**

Standard Gaelic: *tha am fàinne agam* – ‘I have the ring’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **tha mvàinn agam**

Standard Gaelic: *is toil leam an samhradh* – ‘I like the summer’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **stoil leam nzamhar**

Standard Gaelic: *tha am bàta a’ tionndadh* – ‘the boat is turning’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **tha mbàd tionnda**

Standard Gaelic: *bhiodh an iolair a’ seinn* – ‘the eagle would/used to sing’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **bhioch njular seinn**

Standard Gaelic: *tha an geamhradh a' tighinn a-rithist* – ‘the winter is coming again’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **tha ngeamhar tighinn rìsd**

Standard Gaelic: *théid mi thairis air a' ghleann* – ‘I will go beyond the valley’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **théid mi thàirs air ghleann**

Standard Gaelic: *bha am fear eile a' leughadh an leabhar sin* – ‘the other man was reading that book’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **bha mvear eil lèu nleawar sin**

Standard Gaelic: *tha mi a' seasamh an-seo* – ‘I am standing here’, East Perthshire Gaelic: **tha mi seasu njeo**

Standard Gaelic: *tha sinn faisg air a' bhaile* – ‘we are near to the town’, Perthshire Gaelic: **tha sinn faisg air bhail**

Spelling notes: **j** is written for [j], **j** is more or less identical with the English 'j'; **à** is a ‘broad’ version of [ɛ], aka an [ɛ] in contact with a broad consonant. Note also that **v** shows the mutation from [f] to [v] in these dialects, and that [z] is also present in these dialects, written as **z**.

Other languages and dialects in Eastern Scotland

Further to the north is the Gaelic of Strathspey and Aviemore. This shared much in common with East Perthshire Gaelic, including in apocope for example, but it also had its own unique features and sounds. In the *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, informant 179 pronounces *soillsich* – ‘shining’ in an interesting way, which I could write as **seilgtich**, which has an initial slender ‘s’ [j], rather than a broad ‘s’, and a sound written as [ʃ] although I am not exactly sure what this phonetic form represents. Another example based on the language of informant 179 is **samhraidh** for ‘summer’, given with [i] as the final vowel in the nominative form. Informant 179 is from close to Speyside. This landscape is a place of moorlands, mountains and ancient Caledonian Scots pine forests.

Further to the east, there is little evidence to what kind of Gaelic was spoken in the lowlands on the eastern side of the Cairngorms. That some Gaelic was historically spoken there is certain, but there is a different mixture of languages in this area, and the landscape is also different. Imagine Cornwall, but colder. And less granite. But yes, Aberdeenshire is very much a different landscape, green fields, rolling hills that reach down to the sea cliffs and the small fishing villages. If you have ever seen the film *Local Hero*, it was partially filmed in one of these villages, called Pennan. The language of these parts is a form of Doric, the type of Scots also spoken in the city of Aberdeenshire. Doric is still widely spoken, I remember a lady at a hotel said

to me *tha snaa* for 'the snow'. This region also has a strong link to the Pictish language and the 'Picts', which is visible in the name Pennan for example, compare the Welsh word *pen* – head. Another village closeby is named Aberdour, this is again more or less identical with the Welsh *Aber Dŵr*, or the Breton *Aber Dour*, the first word means a place where rivers meet or an estuary, the second word means 'water', so 'estuary of water' essentially.

I think it would be incorrect though to say that Pictish was one language, and that it truly was entirely a Brythonic language like Welsh and Breton. This Pictish area around Aberdeenshire is very defined, archaeologically speaking. But, certain aspects of this Pictish 'archaeological package', for example the sacred stones with carvings on them, are also found outside of areas with P-Celtic place-names. So we are probably talking about a cultural complex within a range of cultures, rather than a single culture. Furthermore, the words *aber and *dour and *pen in Pictish have a rather obscure origin as far as Indo-European is concerned. So, on one hand, they are Indo-European words with Brythonic cognates, close to Welsh. But on the other hand, this particular set of words isn't really a part of Indo-European vocabulary as a whole. Pictish still retains a lot of mysteries, I believe.

It is also quite difficult to define in what way Pictish and Cumbric were connected to each other. I have discussed this on my *Pictish Language* page on www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk. But more recently I have been thinking about the possibility that at least some of the ancestral Picts in Eastern Scotland may have also been connected to seafaring cultures from the Mesolithic through to the Iron Age, and to much more recently. I believe quite strongly that this seafaring, coastal Pictish culture, does not account for everything that is Pictish in Eastern Scotland, and I also believe that this maritime culture in the east, was not necessarily directly linked to 'Brythonic Pictish', and that it was likely in some way distinctive, perhaps with a different language, distinctive especially in some way from the Mesolithic and later cultures that were in Western Scotland. There are for example several caves in Eastern Scotland, where there is evidence of rock art with Pictish-like styles, and it is very interesting and also confusing to look at how this cave-culture in Eastern Scotland might be connected to 'Pictish'. There may be some clues to the presence of similar cultures in parts of Northern England though in sandstone cave areas, although not nearly to the same extent I do not think.

I am unsure about how to interpret any of this, but I will leave it and perhaps something will turn up to the right archaeologists when the time is right. Another curious topic is that of the vetrification of certain Pictish forts like at the Tap O' Noth (is this name connected to a non-Celtic form of Pictish?). Again, this subject seems very mysterious and there doesn't seem to be much information coming forth, but that's okay, maybe the world isn't ready to understand all of this right now.

The Northern European link to language in Northern and Western Scotland

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, 23rd August 2022

This article was originally published in the Silly Linguistics magazine by Rolf Weimar, this version of the article is to give the article a more permanent form, and the article contains some additions and extra sections.

To the north of the Scottish mainland are two groups of islands, known as Orkney and Shetland. Not too long ago, these islands had their own Germanic language, or Germanic languages, referred to as Norn. Over the past few hundred years, the linguistic heritage of these islands became transformed into 'Scots', Orkney Scots and Shetlandic Scots or Shaetlann.

Because these island groups have been inhabited for many thousands of years, it is unclear to what extent Pictish, Old Irish, Old Norse and Norn were spoken across these islands. The Norse heritage in the place-names and in the Scots dialects is clear, but it would perhaps be wrong to say that these islands are 'Norse'. On the other hand, some of the Scots dialect words on these islands do not have a clear Norse origin, for example the Shetlandic word *feivl* – which means 'snow falling in large flakes', according to *An etymological glossary of the Shetland & Orkney dialect*, by Thomas Edmondston (1), page 31. This word is extremely curious, especially as I later discovered in the book *Shetland Folk-Lore* by John Spence, that a variant of this word, spelled as *Fivla* was spoken to refer to **trows** of the female gender. In Shetland, a **trow** is not the same thing as a Scandinavian *troll*, although the etymologies are related. According to John Spence in (2): "*The names Fivla and Tivla appear to have been favourite appellations given to trows of the feminine gender*". He goes on to say that "*fivla is used in Unst for designating a light fall of snow*".

Shetlandic itself is a fascinating language, like Orkney Scots. Often writers of Shetlandic or Shaetlann will include some more Scandinavian-looking spellings, for example, the English sentence "she knows where Whalsey is" could be for example: – **shö kens kwar Kwalsa is**. This example shows a feature of Shetlandic that was shared with Shetland Norn, that in certain parts of the west of Shetland, the initial wh- in Scots and hv- in Old Norse, becomes [kw]. A similar change happens in Icelandic, Faroese, and in Western Norwegian dialects. Below are some further examples of Shetlandic phrases followed by the English.

du is in my haert – you are in my heart

da idders is bön upö da sands da day – the others have been on the sands today

dey ir spaekin Shaetlann – they are speaking Shetlandic

Indeed the heritage of these islands is very ancient, and it is unclear what languages were spoken in the past, and how they might relate to the historically attested languages. There are runic inscriptions on the Orkney Islands which show a form of language that is definitely ‘Old West Norse’. The later Norn language as attested and recorded seems in some cases to show features that are most West-Germanic in nature. These are likely due to the influence of Scots, but it is also possible that some of these features are inherent within the Norn language. These features are somewhat less obvious in the reconstructed form of Norn known as Nynorn, this is a fantastic project which works with what I would describe as an archaic literary register for Norn, which does have real historic origins in certain examples of Norn.

Sometimes there are features in Shetlandic Norn which do show features that make it differ from North-Germanic languages in general. There are for example unintelligible sayings recorded by Edmonston and Jakobsen. The book *Shetland Folk-Lore* by John Spence, F.E.I.S. there is included an ‘ancient spell’ for laying the wind at sea:

**Robin cam ow'r da vaana wi' da sköna
Twaabie, toobie, keelikim, koolikim
Pattrik alanks da Robin
Gude runk da gro.**

The names Pattrik and Robin seem much more recent, but some parts of the spell are not intelligible. In this section of the book, the author is talking about the ‘Finns’ of Shetland mythology.

Whilst the Norse and Pictish elements of Shetlandic history are often discussed, the legends of ‘Finns’ are not. Whether you take this to literally mean ‘Finnish’ or not, the mythology according to John Spence in *Shetland Folk-Lore*, seems to describe the Finns as being a supernatural and magical people, connected in some way to the sea, and wearing some kind of seal-skin. I quote John Spence: *“In Shetland folk-lore the Finns, both men and women, were supposed to possess a skin or garment like the covering of a selkie (seal)”*. The author later goes on to say that : *“In old times there was an aversion to and superstitious dread of killing a selkie, lest should it be a metamorphic Finn”*. Also according to John Spence in *Shetland Folk-Lore*: *“The Finns were said to be the only beings who could safely ride the Neugle”*.

The Neugle is a water being or deity from the Northern Isles, with equine and sometimes serpentine features. Shetlandic mythology really is fascinating to me. Despite Orkney and Shetland both sharing the Norse and Norn heritages, the islands are uniquely different, and often the mythology and ancient relics of the two archipelagos show differences.

I think it very unlikely that a Uralic language was ever spoken in Shetland, and one could argue that the use of 'Finn' for referring to a magical people actually originated in Norway, where 'Finn' was used to refer to the Finnish and Sámi speaking peoples in Scandinavia; these traditions and ideas could have then been brought to Shetland from Norway. On the other hand, the oral literature does seem to suggest that the Finns were a people on Shetland itself, and with some names on Shetland being possibly pre-Indo-European, like 'Unst' and 'Yell' for example, it does make me wonder whether or not there was another seafaring people on Shetland, neither Norse nor Pictish.

South of the Orkney Islands is the Pentland Firth. Norn seems to have been spoken on the southern side of this firth too, in what is now known as Caithness on the mainland; although Caithness was mainly Gaelic-speaking in historic times, unlike Orkney and Shetland. The Norn of Caithness can be seen in coastal place-names, for example Thurso, Caithness Nynorn **Purså**, which could either mean 'Thor's river' or the river of the *purs*, a kind of ancient giant being. Between Orkney and Caithness is the island of Stroma, Caithness Nynorn **Strouma** 'tidal-stream island', in reference to the fast and dangerous tidal streams in the Pentland Firth. In Orkney Nynorn this might be written as **Stroumej**, compare Icelandic *straumey*, Norwegian Nynorsk: *straumøy*. It appears that [ou] or a variant thereof is a common manifestation of Old Norse *au* in Orkney, Caithness and Hebridean Norn. Take also for example the islands named 'Soay', which appears to show a sound like [ou] from the Old Norse word *sauðr* – 'sheep'. In Faroese this sound is *ey* [ɛi:], e.g. *seyður* – 'sheep', *streymur* – 'tidal stream, a current'.

Although it was likely much less spoken in the Hebrides, there is an Old Norse or Norn connection there too, for example on the Isle of Barra, the mountain named *Heaval*, spelled in Gaelic as *Sheabhal* shares the element -val or -bhal with Old Norse *fell* – 'mountain'. The name Barra itself, Gaelic Barraigh, at least contains the element -ey 'island' which can be considered as Norse. The bar- element could be arguably Celtic, Norse, or in my opinion, pre-Celtic. Nearby the island of Vatersay may also mean 'water island'. But this doesn't have to mean that at all many Norse speakers were necessarily living on the islands, and the reason for that is that most of these Norse place-names are of landmarks visible from the sea, and so to some extent these names are 'navigational'.

In terms of pre-Celtic names in the Hebridean islands, it seems quite possible that the name 'Uist' is not of Indo-European origin for example, also the names 'Lewis/Leòdhas' and 'Harris/Na Hearadh, and Hiort (in St Kilda). I think that *hear- or *hir- may be elements of this ancient language.

(1). a glossary of the Orkney and Shetland dialect, by, page 31

(2). Shetland Folk-Lore, by John Spence, F.E.I.S.

Paul Moar, a Shetlandic speaker, helped to tweak one of the sentences which I wrote

.I have worked on the reconstruction of Caithness and of Orkney Norn, but as an extension of the base-work done on Shetland and Orkney Nynorn by Andrei Melnikov, Dagfinn S. Højgaard and others. The Nynorn website can be viewed here: <https://nornlanguage.x10.mx/index.php?intro>

Written in honour of the Finns and of all peoples of northern Scotland

The Finns on Fetlar, Shetland, and links between Gaelic and Finnish

The island of Fetlar is indeed a mysterious island in the Shetlands. The name Fetlar, like the names of islands Unst and Yell, are likely pre-Celtic and pre-Norse, although to suggest that they might somehow be 'Finnish' is a bit of a stretch. As I have already discussed elsewhere, the meaning of 'Finn' may be in reference to indigenous populations, and might not necessarily have to do with the Finnish culture, mythology and language that we know today. Upon the island of Fetlar there is an ancient dyke which runs the entire length of the island. There is no known reason why this dyke was created, but according to different sources it may be either Mesolithic, Neolithic or Bronze Age. This dyke is named Funjegirt, or Finnigert, which refers to the Finns as ancient magical people of Shetland. This is arguably also present to some degree in Faroese mythology, where the name *Dagfinnur* is found for example, meaning 'light Finn' or 'Day Finn', 'Finn of light'. Upon the Finnigert structure there is a stone known as the Haljer o' Fivlagord. When I read about this site recently I was pleasantly surprised to find the word *Fivla* again, and there is also a nearby cave associated with magical beings. I have also wondered if the Shetlandic word **tivlik** – a joint or section of bone structure, is somehow connected to *Fivla*, And possibly the Caithness dialect words *theef* and *feff* – 'a strong smell'. A couple of possible etymological links between Finnish and Scottish Gaelic, which I noticed, are Scottish Gaelic *tionndadh* – turning, St Kilda Gaelic: *ciaunntadh*, compare Finnish *kääntää* – to turn, and Scottish Gaelic *giuthas* – Scots Pine tree, compare Finnish *kuusi* – spruce tree. I believe it entirely possible that these represent some of the earliest language in Scotland, and it is interesting that *tionndadh* or *ciaunntadh* is often connected to the 'turning' of ships and of boats.

Shetlandic etymologies, continued from previous work

These words I have sourced from John J' Graham's *Shetland Dictionary*, the comments and interpretations are just what I think may be possible.

ayre – a beach, of a different meaning to the similar sounding root represented in Old Irish as *érghe*, this Shetlandic word is connected to Icelandic *eyri*, Faroese *oyri*, Norwegian *øyr*, Swedish *ör*. It is perhaps possible though I think that this word is in some way related to the word attested in Old Irish.

pobie – a high hill, I have wondered if this word is connected to the *Papae* and also to the *Paps of Jura*, perhaps implying a connection between the *Papae* and lofty mountains which are round or breast-shaped, perhaps implying some kind of fertility symbolism.

yoag – a large horse mussel, a word which appears rather mysterious, and has the obvious feel of a kind of sacred root word left by the giants or ancestors of Shetland's Mesolithic time. This is pure speculation, but, the Mesolithic period is really when our coastal cultures are easily studied in terms of when they appear to begin, and from my own research it seems often that vocabulary related to Mesolithic style industries (e.g. fishing) may often be incredibly ancient. Another example of this is the traditional River Thames fishing method of using a thorn as a fish hook, something which may have its origins in the Mesolithic. It is perhaps somewhat possible that this word is related to the word *yoke* in English, whilst the Proto-Indo-European **yug-* (my own reconstruction), means 'yoke', the original meaning suggests that it might have once meant 'to join together'. So it's possible that, whilst we may have a connection between Shetlandic *yoag* and Indo-European **yug-*, the Shetlandic word might have branched off earlier. From my previous research on Shetlandic etymologies, I do often find connections to Indo-European, but confusingly, not via Germanic, which might somehow imply that Shetland specifically had a different kind of early relationship to Indo-European which is quite specific to these islands. This word **yug-* is connected to the word 'Yoga', from Sanskrit योग, *yóga* - yoking or union. I feel that these things imply something to do with the 'cosmic egg', a geometric symbol found throughout many cultures in different ways, and without a doubt connected to things like shell-middens around the word, and particularly to mollusks and to seashells.

yoal – a six oared boat, this is a word which I have not been able to find an etymology for, and owing to it being specifically connected to boats, it may be very ancient. The Faroe Islands also have different names for boats of a different number of oars, but as far as I know this word is not in Faroese.

The historic connections of Faroese, my journey of discovery

Although Icelandic and Faroese look alike when written, given their connection to Old Norse, the pronunciation of the two languages is really quite different, including in the prosody, and they are undoubtedly two completely separate languages. Some of the features about the Faroese language, such as certain aspects in the pronunciation, are shared for example with Icelandic, whilst other things are shared with certain Norwegian dialects for example. But the way in which these things are combined is also unique.

Again, I feel a romantic connection to the Faroe Islands in my soul. When I was 18 eleven years ago, I remember I had a female friend who was two years younger than me, we talked online about all sorts of things in life, romance, nature, the mountains and fjords of the Faroe Islands (where she was from). Our conversations were innocent, but also romantic and close. I felt a similar thing in Cornwall eleven years ago, when I met a beautiful blonde lady in a pharmacy store who was about ten years older than me, as I was buying some olbus oil for my nose. I remember she had the most beautiful shoulder length hair, and I loved the way that her shiny blue makeup lit up her eyes, and I complimented her on this. I feel that this is the true essence of romance which comes from our spirit, it is perhaps flirtatious and confident, but it is also loving, without any expectations, pure and all about bringing others a little extra happiness in innocent and simple actions (if they wish it of course), whether they be romantic or not. I hope that both of these people I mentioned are happy and well in all areas of their lives.

Going back to Faroese more specifically, I think it would perhaps be helpful to talk a little briefly about Faroese prosody. In my many years of occasionally finding the courage to study Faroese, I have seen virtually no mention of the prosody, so I've had to glean what I can through my ears. Firstly, Icelandic prosody is different, in some ways Icelandic prosody resembles Finnish prosody, not in a very exact or strong way, but Icelandic prosody is certainly quite different from that of any other North-Germanic language. Faroese prosody is also different, and although I am unaware of the exact dialectal differences, some Faroese, to me, has a prosody that is somewhat similar to certain Western Norwegian dialects, particularly the Norwegian of Sunnmøre and perhaps more specifically the coastal region around Ålesund. In some ways Faroese prosody reminds me of coastal (outer) Nordfjord and Sognefjord Norwegian dialects, but the connection to the Ålesund dialect sounds, in my opinion, stronger. One of the key tonal features of Ålesund Norwegian is that a phrase frequently has a relatively gentle tone compared

to many Norwegian dialects, but at the end of the phrase there is frequently a sudden rise in pitch, followed by an abrupt but more gentle fall in pitch.

When it comes to the pronunciation of Faroese, a lot of the pronunciation is, in my opinion, not really typical for that of a North-Germanic language, although on their own many of these features can be individually identified in other North-Germanic dialects. One of the rarer features in my opinion is the pronunciation of the r in Faroese after a vowel, it almost exactly matches the way in which an r after a vowel is said in many English dialects, and also for example in the Scots dialect of Caithness, and in some of the north mainland dialects of Scottish Gaelic, for example the Torridon dialect (see my free ebook: *Northern Dialects Of Scottish Gaelic, With Sections On Other Celtic Languages And Upon Indigenous American Languages* for more information about Torridon Gaelic). This pronunciation of the -r after a vowel is also comparable to the traditional pronunciation of the -r after a vowel in parts of Jutland, particularly those around Hvide Sande and the Ringkøbing Fjord in Western Jutland.

The Ringkøbing Fjord is not a 'fjord' in the dictionary English language definition of being a flooded glacial valley, but in the Danish language Ringkøbing Fjord is definitely a fjord. Similarly the cognate in Faroese, which is **fjørður** does not mean the same thing as the definition for fjord in the English language, the Faroese **fjørður** may refer to a 'sound' (strait) between two islands for example.

The links between Denmark and the Faroe Islands are arguably pretty strong, I'm not talking about politics here, but about the historical oceanic connections that existed between Denmark and the Faroe Islands, into the present day; some of these connections may arguably pre-date the Vikings. For example in County Donegal in Ireland, the *Danes* in mythology are sometimes described as a more ancient seafaring people, possibly linked to the Tuatha Dé Danann. This is certainly pre-Viking, pre-Germanic and likely pre-Celtic, although there is certainly an ancient connection that exists between Denmark and some Celtic language areas, as evidenced by the archaeologically 'Celtic' cultural elements which have been identified in parts of Denmark. The dialects of the North Jutland island also appear to contain a root word, *mog, which generally seems to mean 'muck', but which in the Vendelbomål dialect may also mean 'pig', at least, this is my guess from reading the way in which this word is applied to names, it certainly seems to mean 'pig-like' in the material I have read in the book *Skældsord på Vendelbomål*. Whilst 'mog' in the sense of Danish *møg* – 'muck', is clearly Indo-European, the Celtic and Jutlandic meanings of this root may be more related perhaps.

In Celtic languages, there is the Welsh word *moch* – pig, and Irish *muc* – pig. It may also be the etymological root-word behind the island of **Mykines** in the Faroe Islands, which in Old Irish would be *mucc inis* – ‘pig island’. Note that this word *muc* is also applied to whales in certain contexts though, and in the case of **Mykines** this may be the more likely etymology, (notes on this are also in my ebook: *Languages And Dialects Of Northwestern Europe And Their Heritage* page 142)

That there is some kind of Irish connection to the Faroe Islands is known, personally, I think it possible that these people spoke a pre-Celtic language, related to Goidelic languages, and that they may have inhabited both the Faroe Islands and Iceland in ancient times. This is visible in some of the Faroese vocabulary and arguably even in how possession is sometimes indicated, for example if I wrote **her er hesturin hjá mær** – ‘here is my horse’, where rather than a possessive pronoun being employed, possession is instead expressed as **hjá mær**, meaning approximately ‘with me’. Note that **hjá** is pronounced [tʰɔɑ:], which is very different from the Old Norse pronunciation of this etymological root, which would be more like [hja:], Icelandic [çau:], which is not used so often to indicate possession in the same way that the Faroese word does.

In terms of these ancient people, we could think of these people perhaps as a single culture but also as wisdom keepers, and this might manifest in the Gaelic Christian traditions, and their beehive shaped meditation places on islands like Skellig Michael, and it may also have been present during the Neolithic, with structures like those at Skara Brae. Whilst I doubt that this culture had a single language, it may be better thought of as a society of interconnected ‘guardians’ who were wisdom keepers and helpers to humanity, at least I would like to think this. It is quite possible I believe that they are somehow connected to the *Papae*, who are also attested in Faroese place-names, for example, the island of **Pappoy**. Possible evidence of a Celtic-like language exists as the Faroese geographical word **knúkur** – ‘hill’, related to Goidelic *cnoc* – ‘hill’, and Faroese **lámur** – ‘flipper, paw or left-hand’, Old Irish *lám* – ‘hand’, modern Scottish Gaelic *làmh*.

There is an obvious connection with seals. In Scotland, at places such as *Cnoc Coig* shell midden, seal bones have been found. This association between humans and seals is found throughout the mythology of the Northern Isles and the Faroe Islands, could this piece of Scottish prehistory be showing us the original cultures that this came to us from?

Further information on this subject is available in: *CNOC COIG: THE SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF A LATE MESOLITHIC SHELL MIDDEN IN WESTERN SCOTLAND TWO VOLUMES VOLUME 2* by Richard William Nolan

Who the *Papae* were exactly is a confusing question, as is their relationship to the seal totem, to the *Finns* and to the ancient Mesolithic peoples. Although a lot of the imagery surrounding them reminds me of known symbolism, like triskelions, knott patterns and cross shapes, there is also a deeply Cthulhonic element to these ideas of shell middens, the cosmic egg and ancient beehive churches. Not in any way a negative thing I don't feel, so long as we respect it.

There are many types of boat in use in the Faroe Islands, some of them very traditional. The general Faroese word for boat is **bátur**, pronounced [pɑ:ˈtʊɹ], like many masculine nouns in Faroese and in Icelandic, this word ends with -ur, which is an insular Nordic equivalent of the masculine -s stem nouns in languages like Latin and Gaulish. Another word for boat in Faroese is a **knørrur**, this word is related to Icelandic *knörr*, Norwegian *knarr*, Danish *knarr*, English *knorr*. This refers to a merchant ship, but the etymological root of this word, perhaps reconstructable as something like *kVnV- is very similar to words for 'boat' found throughout several Asian, African and indigenous South American languages. So even though a *Knorr* is generally associated as being a merchant ship, the history and meaning behind this word seems to go back to the dawn of humanity. It is also perhaps connected to the word *canoe* in English via a completely different source, *canoe* comes from an indigenous Caribbean language, likely Taíno.

There may also be a 'sacred' meaning behind *Knorr* I think, this word could be connected to for example Dutch *snorren*, which can mean to make a purring sound. Although the symbolism is hard to identify, the Viking ships were indeed considered as sacred and magical beings, perhaps even alive. The dragon and serpent symbolism on them can also be connected to cat symbolism, as many of the ships' dragonheads are cat-like in appearance. The same connection between lions and dragons is seen in other parts of the World, for example, Chinese dragons frequently being depicted with whiskers or other cat-like features.

Back onto the subject of Faroese, one of the hardest 'differences' I pick up, is the way that the Old Norse í (a long [i:]) is represented in Faroese as [ʊi:], despite being written etymologically as í, for example **tí** – 'because', [tʊi:], **í** – 'in', for example **í gjár koyrdu vit í Føroyum** – 'we drove yesterday in the Faroe islands', with í pronounced [ʊi:]. Another example is **síggja** – 'to see', where a form occurs without diphthongisation, pronounced [sutʃ:a]. This word shows an example of *skerping*, where a **g** or **gj** is inserted in intervocalic position. More on this later. A similar sound difference is observed between Old Norse ý, likely pronounced [y:], which is also pronounced [ʊi:] in Faroese, for example **Týrur** - a God in Faroese, pronounced [tʰʊi:jʊɹ], there is also a

non-diphthongised version heard for example in **býrt** as in **tú býrt** – you (singular) live.

There are several other vowel changes which are not immediately clear when reading Faroese etymologically. Another example is **búgva** – ‘to live’, which is pronounced [pikva]. The letter **ú** is pronounced the same in **eg búgvi** – ‘I live’, e.g. **eg búgvi ikki í býnum** – ‘I do not live in the town’. The Old Norse equivalent of this word is *búa*, and the Faroese form shows another example of Skerping. Words with **-gv** often also indicate where skerping exists, for example **gjógv** – a cleft or chasm in the cliffs, Old Norse: *gjá*, and **sjógvur** – ‘sea’, Old Norse *sær*. The **ó** in this word is frequently pronounced [ɛ], hence these words are pronounced [tʃɛkf] and [ʃɛkvʊɹ] respectively, except on the island of **Suðuroy** where these words are pronounced more like [tʃɔkf] and [ʃɔkvʊɹ].

There are differences among Faroese dialects, from my own experience it is the Northeastern dialects of the **Norðoyar** such as the dialect of **Klaksvík** which sound more ‘Sunnmørsk-like’, the dialect of **Vágar** sounds different to me, but I have never heard the **Sandoy** and **Suðuroy** dialects before, the latter being the most southerly Faroese dialect.

The island of **Suðuroy** is the only island in the Faroes where coal is mined, and there is indeed still a small coal mine open close to **Hvalba** in the north of **Suðuroy**. For more information about Faroese, some example sentences and information on Skerping, feel free to check out my free online book, titled: *A wee guide to Trøndersk, Faroese, and some other North-Germanic languages*.

The following three pages contain information about the Nuxalk language, and topics related to the Nuxalk language and to Salishan languages. This article contains separate information and examples and explanation from my Nuxalk page on www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk, which also contains some sentences and information I am grateful to be learning.

Nuxalk (Salishan), Afro-Asiatic and Indo-European

(Note: my website www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk contains an article on the Nuxalk language, the article below is different content from that article and is additional, unique content).

Salishan languages are spoken in the Northwest Pacific region of the North American continent, particularly in British Columbia and in the state of Washington. Although many of the Salishan languages are coastal, there are also Interior Salishan languages, which are in many ways quite different from the coastal languages, which is not to say that the coastal languages are always that similar to each other as a whole. Nuxalk is a coastal Salishan language, or at least, a Salishan language spoken around regions of fjords and valleys, and not further inland like some of the other Salishan languages. Salishan languages are not related to Indo-European or to Afro-Asiatic, Salishan languages are deeply indigenous to this part of the Americas, some think since before the Ice Age. However, just as our planet shares similar types of plant, animal, weather and geology, certain 'things' are somehow quite similar in Salishan, Afro-Asiatic, and in certain branches of Indo-European sometimes (namely, Celtic). These groups of languages and the Polynesian and Mayan languages have quite a coastal orientation, this does not apply to the whole of Afro-Asiatic for example, but to those with a more coastal, maritime orientation, such as Ancient Egyptian. These similarities between languages are certainly not from Egypt or from Europe, they are part of humanity's and the planet's collective heritage I feel, just as even though our cultures and languages are different, we interact with similar natural forces. One of the main similarities here, which I have discussed before, is the preference of a VSO order, for example Irish *suíonn sí ar an gcapall* – she sits on the horse, literally 'sits she on the horse'. A similar word order is common in Nuxalk, for example **tl'ap ts ula kulhuuts ts** – I go to the beach, where **tl'ap** means 'go' and **ts** means 'I'. Similarly to in Indo-European, and arguably to Mayan, there are prepositions in Salishan language, here **ula** which means approximately 'towards'. Sometimes in Nuxalk these verbs can become incredibly complex polysynthetic words, an example with fewer elements which I could write is **tamatsits** – I make a canoe or boat, from **tam-** a word expressing creation or building (not a verb according to the expert Nuxalk speaker Dale McCreery), **atsi** – boat, and **ts** – I, which could be written to show the roots as **tam-atsi-ts**. Another example might be **tamxutatimutts** – 'I make a river net for myself', from the elements **tam-** - 'build or make', **xuta** – a river net, or a net, **timut** – 'for oneself', **ts** – 'I'. This is to demonstrate that despite a small similarity in word order, the way in which the languages express information is mainly entirely different. Another exception may be the way in which [s] means both 'is' 'she or he is' and 'and' in both Nuxalk and in Goidelic, although in Goidelic the meaning of 'and' for *is*

is generally seen as a shorter form of *agus* – and. Even though Nuxalk shares a very small number of things with Celtic for example, the way in which these possible ‘root words’ are arranged and created in each language is entirely different, other than these small patterns.

Sometimes other aspects of Nuxalk have reminded me of Celtic languages, for example when expressing intention, one might say **anaykts ska** from **anayk** – intend, want, **ts** – I, and **ska** – will, or shall, but this doesn’t really translate, perhaps it would be better to say that **ska** marks intent, in a somewhat similar way to how *ska* does in Norwegian, also written as *skal* (with perhaps the same ending as found in *vil* – wants or wills).

The word for ‘and’ in Nuxalk is sometimes **s** in certain contexts, but more commonly it is **n**, especially when talking about two nouns for instance. Many words in Nuxalk do not need vowels, although the vowels are there, but not always with the same kind of grammatical meaning as is expressed more importantly with consonants. This is not to say that vowels are not important in Nuxalk, but in some cases they are more ‘fluid’, a little like the way they are in Danish or English, although to a much greater extent perhaps. On my website The Book of Dunbarra I mention that sometimes vowel changes happen due to there being special versions of words which are sung, and when they are sung the vowels are different.

Nuxalk vocabulary is incredibly descriptive, and the way in which longer nouns are formed is also very interesting I feel. For example **plhtkn** – bitterberry bark, is combined with **-lhp** in relation to how the tree provides resources, and thus **plhtknlhp** means ‘bitterberry tree’, derived from the name of the bark, which I find fascinating. Often reduplication is used in Nuxalk to change or to further specify the meaning of something, for example **sulut** – a branch of the sea or an inlet, which is reduplicated and combined with **-ii-** ‘small’ to form **susluutii** – a smaller sea inlet or branch of the sea. I also mention this on the Nuxalk page on my Book of Dunbarra website.

The word above, from what I have seen, appears to be a word connected to the circular movement of the sea and which may be connected to Salishan words for weaving or flowing. In Salishan languages this root often lacks the initial s- seen in this form of the word. The etymology implied from my research has to do with this water movement. This word may also be related to Gaelic word *sàl* – ‘sea water’, this root word has been derived with the suffix **-t** in most Indo-European languages, where it derives a word for salt as a noun. From my research, the appearance of an s- in Salishan languages is perhaps similar to the migratory initial s- in Indo-European languages; The words ‘swell’ and ‘well’ (as in for water to ‘well up’) may show this difference in English.

Nuxalk does contain a number of words which are perhaps related in some way to Indo-European and Afro-Asiatic words, very distantly. I have already

discussed these before with different details, here are some new details, although most of the content of this article I have not ever discussed before. These include for example **smnt** or **smt** – mountain, Scottish Gaelic *monadh*, Welsh *mynydd*, Spanish *montaña*, Basque *mendi*. Nuxalk **smlhk** – ‘salmon’ or ‘fish’, compare English *salmon*, Latin SALMO, Kabyle Berber *aslem* – ‘fish’. Another interesting word is **sts’ix** – ‘gravel’, compare Finnish *hiekkä* – ‘sand’. For other, different examples of Nuxalk sentences, there are some on The Book of Dunbarra website which I wrote, these are not in this article, I do not like to publish the same thing twice. Below are some more examples of Nuxalk sentences:

kstuts tc ala sulh ats – I make it at my house, with the word **kstu-** meaning ‘to make’

anaykts ska smsmats – I want to tell a story, literally ‘I want (intention marker/that) I tell a story, **anayk** – wish or intent, **ts** – I, **ska** – marks intentions, **sma** – story, **smsma** – to tell a story, plus **ts** – I

anaykts ska qaaxlats ala smt ats – I want to drink water at the mountain, with the word **qaaxla** – to drink, **ala smt ats** – at the mountain

tutuplhtknilh ala tmcw ti smt tc – we work on bitterberry bark at the river of the mountain, **tutu-** ‘work on something’, **plhtkn** – bitterberry bark, **-ilh** – we, **tmcw** – river, **ti smt tc** – (of) the mountain

My knowledge of Nuxalk is only very basic, and what I have written here might be said in a better way by a native speaker. As with indigenous American languages as a whole, there are many different challenges that the speaker of a European language is likely to encounter whilst learning these languages, and Nuxalk certainly is challenging for me. One of the most difficult things about Nuxalk for me is the way in which some things are phrased or expressed in a completely different way to how they are in the languages I am familiar with, for example in the phrases with **ska** there is no infinitive verb really, this is what Dale McCreery taught me, that really there is no direct way to translate into Nuxalk “I want to visit the mountain”, it might instead translate to something more like “I want ‘that’orm I visit the mountain”.

I thank the Nuxalk people for being supportive friends and helping me to learn something of their language, even though I find it very difficult and I have not really put in enough effort yet. I would like to acknowledge the Nuxalk people as the rightful protectors, guardians and wisdom keepers of their traditional historic region, and I pray that the Nuxalk people have all the luck in the world in continuing their culture, language, way of life, and in protecting their important natural environments. **Way!** [wai], which in Nuxalk means ‘okay’, ‘so be it’.

The photos below are connected to the topic of 'Sacred Islands of the Outer Hebrides', namely those of the Isle of Barra, which is actually the place where I first met a man who knew Bella Coola, and where I first developed an interest in the Nuxalk language (information on previous three pages)



Above: the sacred island of Barra in the Outer Hebrides, showing the CalMac ferry at Castlebay, **Bàgh a' Chaisteil**, with Kisimuil castle to the left.



Photo above: another view of Castlebay Harbour on the Isle of Barra.

Sacred Islands of the Outer Hebrides

The Outer Hebrides are a very special group of islands in my opinion. Of course all islands are special, but perhaps to me personally the Outer Hebrides are very special. These islands leave a permanent impression upon people I feel, and their biodiversity and cultural diversity can teach us a lot about the world we live in, and how to care for that world. This is something that I feel the Gaels always recognised and were aware of, and this is true today. But sadly the world often does not take this kind of outlook too seriously, and so the old traditions, the sacred places, and the simple joy of hearing seabirds sing, are things that in the modern world, perhaps we do not have time to appreciate enough. But I feel surely that these things are a part of the very essence of life, and the Outer Hebrides are a magical place where these things can still be felt without their being a veil of technology and industry that makes that ancient and magical world harder to find. Of course, this world exists within us, but places that are natural, where life lives good as it always should do, these places allow us to better know that spirituality in our bodies and minds, I feel. Spirituality is often described as a mental or, a spiritual thing, disconnected from the body. But our body needs to be in a clean, safe, balanced state as well, and when we respect these islands, and listen to the sea, and know the animals and plants, our body 'remembers' the joy what it means to be alive in an empowering way. This is at least what I feel personally.

I hope that the photos on the previous page also help to show something of the rawness and specialness of the nature here, the different darks and lights, interchanging as do the sea and sky around the impressive mountains, rising like pyramids out of the sea.

I hope that this book was enjoyable, and God bless

The Scanian language, an introduction

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, written between 2018 and December 2022.

Scanian is a group of Scandinavian/North-Germanic dialects spoken in the historic region of Skåne in Southern Sweden. Sometimes Scanian is classified as a southern Swedish dialect. Historically, Skåne was a part of Denmark, and linguistically, the traditional Scanian dialects have been considered Danish rather than Swedish, specifically East Danish which also includes the dialect of Bornholm.

Scanian is also distinctive in its own senses, and a form of Norse has been spoken here since at least the Iron Age, as there are for example Proto-Norse runestones in the region. In this sense a form of Scanian has been spoken for around two thousand years. The name Scania is also etymologically related to the name *Scandinavia*. Despite Scania being a region of Sweden today, historically Scania was arguably a central part of the early Norse-speaking world as a whole.

Nowadays Scanian, in Swedish: Skånska, generally refers to the Swedish spoken in Scania, which is a continuation of the traditional Scanian language. However, over time, many of the traditional grammatical features and words of the traditional Scanian language, have been replaced by Swedish elements. And so today, Scanian can mean either the traditional dialects, or language, or it can mean those forms of Swedish which are influenced by, or correlated in some way with the traditional language. Despite that the traditional language is becoming extinct, the accent of the local Swedish in this region is still very noticeable.

There is no standard orthography for writing Scanian, and there are also rather large differences in pronunciation across the region. For example in Scanian the dialect may be spelled **Skaunska** or **Skäunska** for example. One of the defining features of Scanian is the development of some unusual diphthongs. Some of these are not so unusual in Scandinavia, but in Scanian there are so many diphthongs, as well as soft consonants, that they give the dialects an entirely different sound to Swedish, even when sentences can be etymologically identical.

Scanian pronunciation

The examples given below on the next page are given using Mikael Lucazin's

Scanian orthography, as detailed in his book *Utkast till orthografi över det Skånska språket*.

Vowels:

a, á, e, é, i, o, ó, u, æ, ø

Consonants

b, d, ð, f, g, ģ, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, r, s, sk, t, tj, v, w, hw

English – Swedish – Scanian – Danish wordlist, Juri Michaelsen May 2018

Scanian is a term used for the modern dialects spoken in Skåne in Southwestern Sweden. Scanian is a very old language, Scandinavian dialects have been spoken in Skåne from the Proto-Norse period, making it one of the places where Norse was first established. The Scanian language is older than both Danish and Swedish, but over time it has been classified into one or the other because it lies between the two languages geographically. Scanian is closer to Danish than it is to Swedish, but a recent layer of innovations from the Swedish language has given Scanian optional, new influences in its already long history of variations and dialects.

Scanian changed on the surface when Scania became joined to Sweden, but the language is still the same underneath. Scanian has a lot of unique words that are not found in other Scandinavian languages, its vocabulary was already equipped with a wide variety of descriptive nouns and phrases before more common terms appeared in the Swedish and Danish languages. Scanian has no standard spelling or recognition. It is normally considered to be a Swedish dialect by those who do not speak it. But the question of dialect or language isn't necessarily important for those who want to speak it and preserve Scanian. Most people who write in Scanian use a spelling system based on Swedish. Scanian has a lot of complex diphthongs, in the Swedish based orthography words with *å* in Swedish may often have **au**. In the orthography used here, this is written **á**.

The orthography I have been using is the same as used in the book, *Utkast till ortografi över Skånska språket*, by M. Lucazin. This orthography is in part an etymological orthography, it is not phonemic to the exact pronunciation of Scanian but is a standard basis and ground which all types of Scanian can be written with. The orthography uses two extra consonants, **ð** and **ģ**. These are included for etymological purposes, and are used instead of **d** and **g** in some environments, the sounds represented by **ð** and **ģ** can influence the surrounding vowels and don't have the same value as Scanian **d** and **g**, this is at least, as I understand it (added 2022). They may also be silent, as in **jağ** - 'l' and **dağ** - 'day', Swedish *jag* and *dag*.

The letter **g** can also become a slight semivowel before some vowels, and the **k** has a soft sound in these positions. There is a frequent **w** in this written language, but it isn't pronounced as a phonetic semivowel, as I understand it from Mikael Lucazin's book. For example **hwim** – 'who', Swedish *vem*, is pronounced [heɪm], and **hwad** – 'what', Swedish *vad* is given in Mikael Lucazin's book as [ha:d]

The Scanian **r** consists of various uvular **r** sounds with some different articulation, although to my ears the **r** sounds like a rolled uvular sound for some speakers too. When the **r** is not initial it often becomes a secondary vowel after another vowel, for example **hors** – 'horse', is given as [hʊɾ:s].

Long vowels in Scanian often become diphthongs. **é** is can be /ʊɪ:/, or various other diphthongs according to Mikael Lucazin's book. In this orthography **á** is often /aʊ:/, **í** is often /eɪ/, **o** is often /eʊ/, **ó** is often /ʊ:/, **y** is /øʏ/, **æ** is often /aɪ/. These pronunciations however do not occur everywhere, because Mikael Lucazin's spelling seems to me to be etymological, the spelled forms have different diphthong realisations in different parts of Scania.

Scanian words sourced from *Utkast till ortografi över Skånska språket, med morfologi och ordlista 1° revisionen* by Mikael Lucazin, 2010. This is also the book being referred to in the paragraphs above.

Pronouns:

Below is a list of pronouns in Scanian, as given in Mikael Lucazin's orthography. I am not entirely sure why the third person singular pronouns are given with eth, **ð**.

<u>English</u>	<u>Swedish</u>	<u>Scanian</u>	<u>Danish</u>
I	<i>jag</i>	jağ	<i>jeg</i>
you/thou	<i>du</i>	du	<i>du</i>
he	<i>han</i>	hanð	<i>han</i>
she	<i>hon</i>	honð	<i>hun</i>
It(gendered nouns)	<i>den</i>	dænð(m), dé(f)	<i>den</i>
it(neuter nouns)	<i>det</i>	dæd	<i>det</i>
we	<i>vi</i>	vi	<i>vi</i>
you lot	<i>ni</i>	i	<i>l</i>
they	<i>de/dom/dåmm</i>	dé	<i>de</i>

Numbers: Below is a list of numbers in Scanian from one to ten.

<u>English</u>	<u>Swedish</u>	<u>Scanian</u>	<u>Danish</u>
one	<i>ett</i>	én, éna, étt	<i>én</i>
two	<i>två</i>	twá, twá, tu	<i>to</i>
three	<i>tre</i>	tré, tré, try	<i>tre</i>
four	<i>fyra</i>	fira	<i>fire</i>
five	<i>fem</i>	fæm	<i>fem</i>
six	<i>sex</i>	seĝs	<i>seks</i>
seven	<i>sju</i>	sju	<i>syv</i>
eight	<i>åtta</i>	átta	<i>otte</i>
nine	<i>nio/nie</i>	niĝe	<i>ni</i>
ten	<i>tio/tie</i>	tiĝe	<i>ti</i>

One noticeable feature here is that the [k] in the numeral ‘six’ disappears in Scanian. The first numbers also have different forms depending on gender. Below is a further list of Scanian words from Mikael Lucazin’s book, with their equivalent in Swedish and Danish.

<u>English</u>	<u>Swedish</u>	<u>Scanian</u>	<u>Danish</u>
land	<i>land</i>	lanö	<i>land</i>
horse	<i>häst</i>	hors	<i>hest</i>
square	<i>torg</i>	törw	<i>torv</i>
midsummer	<i>midsommar</i>	miödsømmar	<i>midsommer</i>
book	<i>bok</i>	bog	<i>bog</i>
water	<i>vatten</i>	vanö	<i>vand</i>
snowflake	<i>snöflinga</i>	snyfnóg	<i>snefnug</i>
farm	<i>bondgård</i>	bonöagárö	<i>bondegård</i>
forest	<i>skog</i>	skow	<i>skov</i>
rowing boat	<i>roddbåt</i>	robád	<i>robåd</i>
name	<i>namn</i>	nawn	<i>navn</i>
heart	<i>hjärta</i>	hjarta	<i>hjerter</i>
mouth	<i>mun</i>	flabb	<i>mund</i>
week	<i>vecka</i>	uge	<i>uge</i>
man	<i>man</i>	manö	<i>mand</i>
boy, lad	<i>pojke</i>	pág	<i>dreng</i>
home	<i>hem</i>	hém	<i>hjem</i>
many	<i>många</i>	mánga	<i>mange</i>
think	<i>tänka</i>	tænka	<i>tænke</i>
grunt	<i>grymta</i>	gløffa	<i>grynte</i>
read	<i>läsa</i>	läsa	<i>læse</i>

Other nouns and verbs

Below is a list of other nouns and verbs with Mikael Lucazin's Scanian orthography.

<u>English</u>	<u>Swedish</u>	<u>Scanian</u>	<u>Danish</u>
spill	<i>spilla</i>	slabba	<i>spilde</i>
chirp	<i>kvittra</i>	kwedra	<i>pippe</i>
water source	<i>källa</i>	kélöe	<i>kilde</i>
to swallow	<i>svälja</i>	swælla	<i>synke/sluge</i>
to run	<i>springa, löpa</i>	rænöa	<i>løbe</i>
to giggle	<i>fnittra</i>	fnedra	<i>fnise</i>
do	<i>göra</i>	gøre	<i>gøre</i>
buy	<i>köpa</i>	køba	<i>købe</i>
to open	<i>öppna</i>	obna	<i>åbne</i>
be called	<i>heta</i>	heda	<i>hede</i>
to turn	<i>vända</i>	vænöa	<i>dreje</i>

Interrogatives:

Below is a list of interrogatives. Note that (m) – masculine, (f) – feminine, (n) – neuter, (pl) – plural

<u>English</u>	<u>Swedish</u>	<u>Scanian</u>	<u>Danish</u>
who?	<i>vem?</i>	hwim?	<i>hvem?</i>
what?	<i>vad?</i>	hwad?	<i>hvad?</i>
why?	<i>varför?</i>	hwomen?	<i>hvorfor?</i>
		hwadfor	
how?	<i>hur?</i>	hwodaner? (m)	<i>hvordan?</i>
		hwodana? (f)	
		hwodant? (n)	
		hwodana? (pl)	
which?	<i>vilken, vilket, vilka?</i>	hwokken? (m)	<i>hvilken, hvilket,</i>
		hwokkena? (f)	<i>hvilke?</i>
		hwokkeö? (n)	
		hwokkena? (pl)	

Scanian sentences in a different dialect of Scanian with different orthography

Although I cannot define exactly where this dialect of Scanian is spoken, I have learned some of this dialect through reading texts from various people. These Scanian examples show a dialect with extensive diphthongs, but which are different somewhat from those represented in Mikael Lucazin's orthography. The standard Swedish/Rikssvenska forms are given below.

heused ea steort – the house is big

heused – the house, **ea** – is, **steort** – big

Swedish: *huset är stort*

jea kean ente preåta Skeånska – I cannot speak Scanian

jea – I, **kean** – can, **ente** – not, **preåta** – speak, **Skeånska** – Scanian

Swedish: *jag kan inte tala/prata Skånska*

beogen ea peå Skeånska – the book is in Scanian

beogen – the book, **ea** – is, **peå** – on, in, **Skeånska** – Scanian

Swedish: *boken är på Skånska*

men, jea kean skreiva en leiden beog peå Skeånska – but, I can write a little book in Scanian

men – but, **jea kean** – I can, **skreiva** – write, **en leiden beog** – a little book, **peå Skeånska** – in Scanian

Swedish: *men, jag kan skriva en liten bok på Skånska*

jea skea skreiva dea peå Skeånska i beogen – I shall write it in Scanian in the book

jea skea – I shall, will, **skreiva** – write, **dea** – it, **peå Skeånska** – in Scanian, **i beogen** – in the book

Swedish: *jag ska skriva det på Skånska i boken*

an introduction to Bohuslänska – a group of southwestern Swedish dialects

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, October 2022

Bohuslän is a coastal region of southwestern Sweden, and one of the few parts of Western Sweden with a coastline. Various fjords go inland from complex coastlines, forming an archipelago of sorts. The language here is very variable, with variations from islands to island, from fjord to fjord. Because Bohuslän lies so close to the Norwegian border, it is perhaps not surprising that the Bohuslänska dialects can sound very Norwegian-like when spoken.

.Where standard Swedish has *jag* for the first-person-singular pronoun, Bohuslän has for example **ja**, **jä** or **jäj**. For example *jag är* – I am, in standard Swedish, which in Bohuslänska might be written as **jä ä**. Or for example **ja ä i Nörje** – I am in Norway, standard Swedish *jag är i Norge*, compare southeast Norwegian *je e i Norge*

.There are various vowel changes, which may manifest quite differently across different parts of the region, for example standard Swedish *fisk* – fish, Bohuslänska **fesk**, **feisk** or **fisk**, standard Swedish *hem* – home, Bohuslänska **hem** or **him**. Also for example standard Swedish *det är* – it is, Bohuslänska **dä ä**.

.It is common in Bohuslän for final voiceless stops to become voiced, for example standard Swedish *ut* – out, Bohuslänska **ud**, standard Swedish *båt* – boat, Bohuslänska **båd**.

.Some writers of Bohuslänska write **w**, I am not sure if this is phonetically [w] as exists in certain Dalecarlian, Bondska and Jutlandic dialects, or if like in Mikael Lucazin's Scanian orthography it does not represent [w] exactly. For example **two** – two, Swedish *två*, Norwegian *to*.

(Note: that the voicing of intervocalic t to d in Scanian and in Bohuslänska means that words in these dialects can resemble Danish words, e.g. Danish *båd* – boat. However, in the Swedish dialects this sound is [d] and not [ð] as in Danish. The Danish [ð] is also not the same as [ð] in Icelandic and in English.

Phonology in Cumbria: some points

Below are some phonetic notes on the dialect of Cumbrian, and more generally upon the phonology of language in Cumbria. For further information please see my other work on the Cumbrian dialect, which I think is going to be published in the Silly Linguistics magazine by Rolf Weimar. Below are some separate notes on the Cumbrian dialect, which I think help to show something of the curious way in which the relationships to North-Germanic manifest, and some curious things about the ancient phonologies of the region, perhaps.

.The use of semivowel **w** before certain vowels e.g. **worchard** – ‘orchard’ (1), **wop** – ‘hope’ (1); and when after consonants, e.g. **fwolk** – people, folk, **cwoat** – coat, **bwoat** – boat, **rwoar** – roar (1). I think it possible that the appearance of [w] after a consonant may be vaguely connected to how ‘broad consonants’ have w-rounding in Irish.

.The use of the semivowel **y** before certain vowels e.g. **yam** – ‘home’, **yan** – ‘one’, **yak** – ‘oak’. In some cases this can be described as a parallel development or shared development found in Danish, specifically in Jutlandic, and in Northern English. Compare for example Jutlandic *jen* or *jæn* – ‘one’, but Old Norse *einn* - ‘one’. Interestingly, this vowel-breaking process is separate to the vowel-breaking processes which happened in Old Norse, but somehow and for some reason it occurs in Danish and in Northern English. In Cumbrian dialect the word ‘oven’ is **yubm**; apart from being very fun to say, how this word evolved is somewhat of a mystery I think.

.Certain dialects in Cumbria have retroflex consonants. These are also found in many North Germanic languages, such as the Bondska language in Northern Sweden; showing an example of a more localised crossover between Cumbrian English and North-Germanic. Retroflex consonants occur when an r is in contact with another consonant, for example the -rd- in **worchard** is pronounced [ɖ] in the dialect of Lorton (1).

.Cumbrian dialects sometimes distinguish three voiced dentals, [d], [ɖ]-[ð] and [ð]. The third form, [ð], usually becomes one of the previous two forms. The second form is perhaps best described as [ð] but so slight that it more closely resembles [ɖ]. This form occurs intervocalically, e.g. in **mudder** – mother, **fadder** – father. I have wondered if perhaps this is connected to a more ancient layer of language, as there are also variations in dental consonants in the so-called Cumbric ‘Celtic’ place-names of Northern England, where for example the word **cēt* – ‘forest’ is sometimes attested as ‘keth’, e.g. Penketh near Liverpool, reconstructed form: **pen-ceð*; in Welsh this word appears as *coed*, *cwéd*, *cwéd* and *côd*, Cornish *coos*, Breton *koad*; this word may be a pre-Indo-European word, which is also made its way into English as the word ‘heath’.

Most of the words above come from my own understanding of the dialect as I have learned it, words marked with (1) are re-spelled from phonetic forms given in *Grammar of the Dialect of Lorton (Cumberland): Historical and Descriptive With an Appendix on the Scandinavian Element Dialect Specimens and a Glossary* by Börje Brilioth

I hope that this book was enjoyable, and God bless :)